Canadian Heritage Patrimoine canadien

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News Release ~ Communiqué

Canadian Heritage Department sets the record straight on official languages

Ottawa, July 5 1995 - The recent media coverage surrounding discussions that the Department of Canadian Heritage has had with community-based groups working on behalf of the Anglophone community of Quebec requires some clarification.

Articles in La Presse and Le Devoir suggested that Ottawa was offering $12 million to 15 Quebec Anglophone groups. The story went on to allude to confidential documents and discreet negotiations. In follow-up stories, this evolved into quotes from prominent individuals alleging a federal conspiracy and efforts to make Quebec bilingual.

The Department of Canadian Heritage provides the following factual information in order to set the record straight.

The Canada Community agreement is a mechanism launched by the Department 18 mouths ago in cooperation with official language community groups (Anglophones in Quebec, Francophones in other provinces), to make the best use of available resources.

Discussions on the agreements have been ongoing for almost two years and have already produced agreements with the Francophone communities of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. Discussions with other official language minority communities continue.

The agreement is essentially an administrative measure, designed to reduce bureaucracy and use resources in the most important priority areas.

Financing to the Anglophone community of Quebec is not new. Groups working for the interests of Anglophones in all regions of Quebec, in key sectors, have been funded for nearly 25 years. The same is true for their counterparts working on behalf of Francophones in all other provinces and territories.

The figure of $12 million over four years is the amount requested by the community groups. The Department of Canadian Heritage has never put this figure on the table. The funding allocated to anglophone communities in Quebec now amounts to $2 million per year. The negotiations currently underway will allow us to get maximum utilization of available funds.

The Federal Government has supported official language minority communities since 1969 when the Parliament of Canada adopted the Official Languages Act. This Act gives a mandate to the Federal Government to support the development of official language minority communities across Canada.

Information :

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